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ABSTRACT

This book details the history of Texas between 1821 and 1836 and describes the two-way exchange of land, power, culture, and social institutions between the Anglo-American frontier and the Hispanic frontier. In 1821, when Anglos first began to settle in the Mexican state of Coahuila y Texas, Tejanos had had permanent settlements in place for nearly a century. The basic institutions of Tejano life and culture common to these settlements were a long-lasting influence on the evolution of local goverment and institutions in the republic and state of Texas. For example, the foundations of the Texas educational system can be traced back to Tejano influence. Tejanos struggled for a system that would allow state aid without sacrificing local control of education. In the decree of 1826, the municipal government of Bexar proposed that the state of Coahuila y Texas grant tracts of land to the municipalities, with the proceeds of that land to be used to fund schools. However, the most beneficial law of the Mexican period was Decree No. 299, which established the permanent school fund in 1833. Although many Anglos were slow to accept the Tejano philosophy of locally managed and funded education, the Republic of Texas president Mirabeau B. Lamar later signed into law an educational system patterned directly after the Tejano system. Additionally, Texas laws concerning public domain, mineral rights, water rights, homesteading, and community property, as well as Texas ranching traditions that tightly control methods of range and livestock management can be traced back to Hispanic traditions established in the pre-Anglo era. Although important aspects of Tejano society survived the Mexican period, Tejanos themselves suffered under both Mexican and Anglo domination during the Revolution and Republic years. By 1845, Tejanos had fled their land, and 40 of the 49 old Tejano ranchos passed into Anglo hands for a tiny fraction of their value. Contains 148 references and an index. (LP)

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